

Our Yesterdays Are Dusty Death

by Katie Bell

Category: Harry Potter

Genre: Drama

Language: English

Status: In-Progress

Published: 2000-02-22 09:00:00

Updated: 2000-02-22 09:00:00

Packaged: 2016-04-27 13:36:57

Rating: K+

Chapters: 1

Words: 3,393

Publisher: www.fanfiction.net

Summary: Sirius Black, in Azkaban, reflects upon his life.

Our Yesterdays Are Dusty Death

> <meta name="ProgId"> Padfoot

Author's Note: I am putting my note here, rather than at the end, because I don't want anything distracting from the close of the story. This story is, in my opinion, one of the most powerful that I have written. If you're looking for something amusing, you'll have to read something else. This is a Sirius "er, serious, tale, and that was the one joke in the whole thing. I don't think it'll be confusing, but if it is, feel free to ask any questions, and please, review. A thousand blessings on the head of every reviewer. The quote comes from MacBeth, Act 5, Scene 5, Lines 22-25.

* * *

>

I am Sirius Black.

I am Sirius Black, and I am innocent. Do you hear me? I am Sirius Black! I am Sirius. The walls echo back Sirius, Sirius, mockingly. I run my hands through my tangled hair, which I gave up trying to tame so long ago. How long has it been? Years? Decades? What has happened in the outside world since the last night that I was free? The last night that I was alive, I sometimes think. They all run together, the past and the future. Each day is the same, and will be until I die. 'Tomorrow and tomorrow and tomorrow.' That meant something to me once. I remember more of it: 'Tomorrow and tomorrow and tomorrow, creeps in this petty pace from day to day, to the last syllable of recorded time, and all our yesterdays have lighted fools the way to dusty death.' All our yesterdaysâ€|. I have so many, so many memories of yesterdays.

That is on a good day. On bad days, I can remember nothing but that I am innocent, and that my name is Sirius Black. Other days, I have memories, like shadows. Some, the bad memories, are dark and sharp. The memories I try so hard to keep are fleeting, illusive. Faint as a shadow on a sunless day, or a moonless night. Sometimes I can remember the good memories by recalling the bad ones. Today is a good day. I can remember most things. I shy away from the most painful memories, recalling instead my childhood. I will not go crazy. I am innocent. I will get out of here someday. I am Sirius Black.

* * *

>

Sirius is what my mother named me. I imagine that my father would have preferred a more common name, but I don't know because he ran off with another Muggle when I was four. I don't remember him at all. After that, mother and I moved in with her best friend from school: Ann Potter. Aunt Ann and Uncle Richard were kind to me, almost second parents, and they had a son. James and I were only a few weeks apart in age, and soon we were inseparable. People commented on the fact that we were closer than many brothers. The two of us share childhood exploits together in an idyllic time.

That ended when we were eight. Mother and Aunt Ann had gone to a conference, and James and I were playing wizard chess when Uncle Richard came in. We looked up, and could tell immediately that something was wrong. His face, normally kind, was set in stone. It looked as if he had been weeping.

"Boys," he said, his voice breaking. "Boys, there's some bad news." We stared at him, round-eyed and frightened. "The conference where your mothers were has been attacked. Many witches and wizards are dead. Your mothers are both among them." Abruptly, he left the room, not wanting us to see him cry, I think. I stared at James and he at me, the import of the words slowly sinking in.

"Dead?" James said slowly. "How can they be?"

"Maybe he's mistaken," I said hopefully. "Who attacks a conference of wizards?"

"His name is Voldemort," a voice said. It sounded strange, but it was Uncle Richard's voice. "He is a powerful Dark wizard, and can do many things we thought impossible."

"Voldemort," James whispered.

"Voldemort," I said. At that moment, a hatred for the bearer of that name was kindled in me. A hatred that would never die.

* * *

>

Voldemort! Can you hear me? I laugh at you! I tell you, you are pathetic! Look at those who help you, look at them and see them for what they are! And look at us, who opposed you, the bright shining hopes of the future. That's what they called us. Well, you seem to have done a pretty good job of extinguishing this light. Come and

finish the job, Voldemort. I'm not afraid of you. I am Sirius Black.

* * *

>

When we were eleven we left for Hogwarts. Both of us were looking forward to school a great deal. It would be an opportunity to learn many things. It might give us a chance to learn how to defeat Voldemort. Although neither of us spoke of our desire, James and I both knew that ultimately, we wanted to face and destroy the monstrous creature. We just hoped that we'd get the chance.

We were put in Gryffindor, just as we had hoped. In fact, the Sorting Hat hardly hesitated at all before sending us to sit with our new housemates. I looked at the students sitting around the table, and wondered which would become the most important in my new life.

There was a girl, a first year like I was, who drew the eye with her flame-red hair. She smiled at James and me when she saw us looking at her.

"I'm Lily," she said.

"James,"

"Sirius." I grinned at her. "So, uh, tell us about yourself."

"Nothing really to tell. I'm a Muggle-born and have a Muggle sister. That's about it," she said, shrugging. "What about you two?"

"Oh, I'm a pureblood, and Sirius is half-blood, but really, who cares?" James smiled at her.

"You two know each other?"

"Yes," I said. "James' father is my guardian. We've grown up together since we were very young."

"That's nice, then, that you're in the same House." Now I turned to the boy on the other side of me. He hadn't said a single word.

"I saw you getting Sorted. Remus Lupin, right?"

"Right," he said, and smiled. It was a weak smile, as if he was unaccustomed to the act and a bit unsure how to smile. "I'm a pureblood, by the way, but I do agree that it doesn't matter what you are as much as who you are."

"Exactly," Lily said. "I'm glad that you all think so. There were these boys on the train who were very rude. Said that muggle-borns shouldn't be allowed to come."

"Eh, those were probably Slytherins," James said. "Or they will be by now. Most of that garbage is from that House."

"I see."

"Excuse me," came a small voice. "I haven't introduced myself. Peter Pettigrew. I'm a pureblood." We all looked at a very small boy, whose features were rather forgettable. I had seen him, but not paid any attention to him; he just looked so insignificant.

* * *

>

Pettigrew! Hah! The coward. He always was. I never thought he'd have the courage to blow himself up like that, or I'd have been ready. It's a good thing he's not still alive, or, Azkaban and Dementors or no, I'd kill him. How could he have betrayed James and Lily after all they'd done for him? And how could I have thought that Remus was the spy? Oh, Moony, how could I have been so foolish? Did I, in the end, succumb to that prejudice that you feared so much? Forgive me, Moony.

* * *

>

"So, Remus, we'd like to talk to you," James said, sliding into the seat next to him at the library table. Remus looked up from the book he'd been studying.

"Yes? I really need to study this, guys. Finals are only a month away." I reached out, took the book from him, and closed it gently.

"Remus, we're here to ask you," James began, "No, to tell you that we know your secret."

"You do?" The color had gone from his face, and his voice trembled.

"You're a werewolf, aren't you, Remus?" I asked.

"Yes," he said in a very quiet voice. He didn't look at us. "I am."

"Why didn't you tell us?" James asked gently.

"Because I was afraid. I was afraid that you'd despise me for what I am, just as everyone who has known has despised me." He looked at us, eyes flashing. "I was very young when I was bitten, I didn't understand what was happening to me. Can you even imagine what it's like? Once a month I become a monster! It's painful, it's shameful. I hate it, and I hate myself for it." His voice broke and he turned away. "And now I suppose everyone at Hogwarts will hate me too."

"They will not," James said. "We've only told Peter, and he's too scared to tell anyone."

"I told him I'd break his arm if he did," I said, grinning.

"We're your friends, Remus. We don't care if you're a werewolf."

"You don't?"

"It makes no difference," James said. "None at all."

"Yes, you're stuck with us," I said. Remus looked at us, tears in his eyes still, but from happiness and not sorrow.

"I can't tell you how much this means to me."

* * *

>

Oh, Remus, where are you now? Do you ever think of me? Do you wonder how your friend could have betrayed James and Lily so? Or do you perhaps think that I am innocent? No, I cannot believe that: there is no proof. Only a few people know the truth, and none of them will tell. But I know. I, Sirius Black.

I am innocent, I swear it! I beat my head against the wall. It is too hard to think. It's getting worse. I transform to Padfoot, to the dog where I can escape, just a little, the horrors of Azkaban. Thank you, James, for encouraging me to learn this spell. Did it mean as much to you, Remus, as it seemed to? We'd have done anything to make you feel better. I shouldn't have pulled that stunt; you might have been expelled. But I do wish that Snape had died. I hate the man, even now. Hate seems to be almost all that's left of me; hatred and a desire for revenge.

* * *

>

James was full of joy when he told me that Lily and he were to be married.

"We want you to be best man, of course," he said. "You are my best friend, after all, Padfoot."

"I am honored, Prongs," I said. "Of course I'll be best man."

I can remember that day still, dimly. It was very happy, as I recall. James and Lily were both shining in their joy and love and happiness. It didn't seem that anything would ever ruin our lives. When Harry was born — "Harry! A beautiful baby, my godson, just like his father, except for his green eyes. He brought joy to all of our lives.

Voldemort, of course, destroyed all that. Why didn't I trust Remus? Why didn't I see that Pettigrew, the weak, sniveling, pathetic Pettigrew, was the traitor, not Remus? Remus, who was the truest friend that anyone ever had. I may not have betrayed James and Lily, but if it had not been for me, they would be alive today, I am sure of it.

That night — "no, it's too horrible to think of. But I can't get the picture out of my head; it repeats over and over and over again. Landing my motorcycle in their yard, running up to the house, seeing instantly that something was horribly wrong. The door hung on one hinge; the roof had a huge hole in. I pushed the door open further

and saw James' body lying on the floor. From the way he had fallen, I was sure he had tried to buy time for Lily and Harry to escape. Tears streamed down my face as I knelt beside my friend. His flesh was cold to the touch.

"James," I whispered. "I'm so sorry." Just then, I heard a noise and looked up. Hagrid stood over me, a small bundle in his arms. It wailed suddenly.

"Harry? He's alive?"

"Aye, poor boy, that he is," Hagrid said. "And Yeh-Know-Who's gone, too."

"Gone?"

"Gone. Dumbledore reckons that he won't be back either, not soon at least. Summat about Harry here finished him off."

"Lily?" I asked, wondering if perhaps she, too, had escaped.

"No, Sirius. I'm sorry. I know how much yeh loved them both." He put a massive hand on my shoulder. "But the evil one that did this is gone now."

No, he hasn't, Hagrid, he's not dead yet. But I didn't mean Voldemort. I meant Pettigrew. "Give me Harry," I pleaded. "I'm his godfather, James would have wanted me to take care of him."

"I can't," Hagrid said, his eyes full of sympathy. "Dumbledore's ordered me to bring Harry to him. Seems he's to be raised by his mother's family."

"Hagrid â€"you can't mean that!" I said. "Lily's told â€"did tell â€" me about them. They hate magic, they'll probably kill Harry."

"Dumbledore will take care of everythin'," he said. "I'm sorry, Sirius, but that's the way thin's are going to be." As he spoke, I realized that Dumbledore thought I had been the Secret-Keeper, thought that I had betrayed James and Lily.

"Go on," I said. "Take my motorcycle. I won't need it any more." Hagrid stared at me, but he went out. A minute later, the bike roared to life.

"James," I said, taking my friend's dead hand. "James, I failed you. But I'm going to avenge your death. I'm going to kill that swine Pettigrew if it's the last thing I do." I stood. "James, my friend â€"my brother, goodbye."

* * *

>

James! Where have you gone? Surely, you can't be dead? Not someone as alive as you? I remember winning the Quidditch Cup together, three years straight. I remember dancing at your wedding, laughing with you at the birth of your son. Surely, you can't be dead? Surely, I'll wake up and see you grinning, telling me that we're going on another

adventure tonight? Surely, I'll see Lily smiling over your shoulder, laughing at our escapades and trying to keep us out of trouble? Surely, you can't be dead?

The walls don't answer me; the steady drip-drip-drip of water is the only sound I hear. Well, Pettigrew, how did you like your end? It wasn't the justice I'd have liked you to face, butâ€¦

* * *

>

I must have been half-mad already by the time I got to London. I knew I was close on the trail of Pettigrew, and when I saw him on the open street, I allowed myself a grim smile. He turned, and I was pleased to see fear in his eyes. But:

"James and Lily, Sirius! How could you?" He even had fake tears in his eyes. All of a sudden, the street around him blew up. Dust roared, and people screamed. I realized that he had killed himself, for fear of what I'd do to him, I supposed.

And me? I laughed. I stood on the street, with broken glass and bodies everywhere, and laughed. I laughed at the end of my world, for I knew now that no one would believe that I had not been working for Voldemort. And I was still laughing when they took me away.

* * *

>

How long ago was that? Does anyone know? Does anyone care? It's been a long time for me, an innocent man. They say that I killed thirteen people and betrayed my best friend, that I worked for Voldemort, who they fear to name. I didn't even fight it, for who would have believed me? And perhaps it was only fitting that I should be punished, for wasn't I responsible for the deaths that had occurred because of my stupidity? Still, it has been a very long time.

I am Sirius Black, do you hear me?

* * *

>

"I hear you, Sirius, and I know who you are." I blink. A small man stands in front of my cell. He wears an odd suit and carries a paper.

"Who are you?" I ask roughly.

"I am Cornelius Fudge, the minister of magic."

"I see. You're here to inspect the prison, I suppose?"

"Indeed."

"Don't worry, nobody could possibly get out of here." I give him a wolfish grin. He looks uncomfortable and begins to move on.

"Mind if I have that paper? If you're done with it, that is. I miss the crossword." He looks startled, but hands it through the bars to me. I sit down on my bunk and open it. I look at the date. Twelve years, almost, I've been in this place. I look at the lead story. A family has won some money â€"the Weasleys. I think I remember Arthur Weasley from school. He'd been a lot older than I had, maybe a full seven years older. Now he had a nice family and a nice life. They're all smiling happily and look thrilled to be in Egypt. Even the rat sitting on the shoulder of the youngest boy â€"

I freeze. That is no rat. I know him too well for that. I've seen him hundreds of times before, and I knew that rat.

So Pettigrew, you are alive. I look at the story, and my blood freezes. Five of the children attend Hogwarts. Including, I was sure, the boy whose pet Pettigrew is. "He's at Hogwarts," I mutter. Harry will be there by now, I know it. I saw the book with his name in. McGonagall showed it to me herself, not long after Harry was born. He'll be thirteen, almost. He'll be learning magic, making friends, maybe even playing Quidditch. I wonder what he knows about me? Does he know the story of Sirius Black, his father's friend who betrayed his family? If so, he'll hate me. But I have no choice now. Pettigrew won't leave Harry alone forever, and I am the only one who knows that he is alive, that he is the spy. As soon as Voldemort gains power, Pettigrew will move against Harry. I must stop him. I, Sirius Black. I am Sirius Black.

I will kill you, Pettigrew.

I'll gather my strength before making my move. I'll need all the strength I can get to swim the mile or so from Azkaban to England. I'll move as a dog, go to Hogwarts, and find a way to kill Pettigrew. They can put me back in Azkaban, after that, but I don't care.

He's at Hogwarts.

I will kill you, Pettigrew.

I will kill you, Voldemort.

He's at Hogwarts.

James, I'll protect your son.

These things I vow upon my very life.

I am Sirius Black.

End
file.